

PATENT COOPERATION TREATY

PCT

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INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION REPORT

(PCT Article 36 and Rule 70)

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Applicant's or agent's file reference P30612AGMU	FOR FURTHER ACTION See Notification of Transmittal of International Preliminary Examination Report (Form PCT/IPEA416)	
International application No. PCT/GB02/02730	International filing date (day/month/year) 14.06.2002	Priority date (day/month/year) 12.02.2002
International Patent Classification (IPC) or both national classification and IPC G09F21/04		
Applicant AGRIPA LIMITED et al.		

- This International preliminary examination report has been prepared by this International Preliminary Examining Authority and is transmitted to the applicant according to Article 36.
- This REPORT consists of a total of 7 sheets, including this cover sheet.

☒ This report is also accompanied by ANNEXES, i.e. sheets of the description, claims and/or drawings which have been amended and are the basis for this report and/or sheets containing rectifications made before this Authority (see Rule 70.16 and Section 607 of the Administrative Instructions under the PCT).

 These annexes consist of a total of 9 sheets.

- This report contains indications relating to the following items:
 - I ☒ Basis of the opinion
 - II ☐ Priority
 - III ☒ Non-establishment of opinion with regard to novelty, inventive step and industrial applicability
 - IV ☐ Lack of unity of invention
 - V ☒ Reasoned statement under Rule 66.2(a)(ii) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement
 - VI ☐ Certain documents cited
 - VII ☐ Certain defects in the international application
 - VIII ☐ Certain observations on the international application

Date of submission of the demand 16.08.2003	Date of completion of this report 07.11.2003
Name and mailing address of the International preliminary examining authority:  European Patent Office D-80298 Munich Tel. +49 89 2399 - 0 Tx: 523656 epmu d Fax: +49 89 2399 - 4465	Authorized Officer Whittington, J Telephone No. +49 89 2399-2781 

**INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY
EXAMINATION REPORT**

International application No. **PCT/GB02/02730**

I. Basis of the report

1. With regard to the elements of the international application (*Replacement sheets which have been furnished to the receiving Office in response to an invitation under Article 14 are referred to in this report as "originally filed" and are not annexed to this report since they do not contain amendments (Rules 70.16 and 70.17)*):

Description, Pages

1-25 as originally filed

Claims, Numbers

1-44 received on 16.08.2003 with letter of 12.08.2003

Drawings, Sheets

1/6-6/6 as originally filed

2. With regard to the **language**, all the elements marked above were available or furnished to this Authority in the language in which the international application was filed, unless otherwise indicated under this item.

These elements were available or furnished to this Authority in the following language: , which is:

- ☐ the language of a translation furnished for the purposes of the international search (under Rule 23.1(b)).
- ☐ the language of publication of the international application (under Rule 48.3(b)).
- ☐ the language of a translation furnished for the purposes of international preliminary examination (under Rule 55.2 and/or 55.3).

3. With regard to any **nucleotide and/or amino acid sequence** disclosed in the international application, the international preliminary examination was carried out on the basis of the sequence listing:

- ☐ contained in the international application in written form.
- ☐ filed together with the international application in computer readable form.
- ☐ furnished subsequently to this Authority in written form.
- ☐ furnished subsequently to this Authority in computer readable form.
- ☐ The statement that the subsequently furnished written sequence listing does not go beyond the disclosure in the international application as filed has been furnished.
- ☐ The statement that the information recorded in computer readable form is identical to the written sequence listing has been furnished.

4. The amendments have resulted in the cancellation of:

- ☐ the description, pages:
- ☐ the claims, Nos.:
- ☐ the drawings, sheets:

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5. ☐ This report has been established as if (some of) the amendments had not been made, since they have been considered to go beyond the disclosure as filed (Rule 70.2(c)).

(Any replacement sheet containing such amendments must be referred to under item 1 and annexed to this report.)

6. Additional observations, if necessary:

III. Non-establishment of opinion with regard to novelty, inventive step and industrial applicability

1. The questions whether the claimed invention appears to be novel, to involve an inventive step (to be non-obvious), or to be industrially applicable have not been examined in respect of:

☐ the entire international application,

☒ claims Nos. 21,28,40

because:

☐ the said international application, or the said claims Nos. relate to the following subject matter which does not require an international preliminary examination (specify):

☒ the description, claims or drawings (*indicate particular elements below*) or said claims Nos. 21,28,40 are so unclear that no meaningful opinion could be formed (*specify*):

see separate sheet

☐ the claims, or said claims Nos. are so inadequately supported by the description that no meaningful opinion could be formed.

☐ no international search report has been established for the said claims Nos.

2. A meaningful international preliminary examination cannot be carried out due to the failure of the nucleotide and/or amino acid sequence listing to comply with the standard provided for in Annex C of the Administrative Instructions:

☐ the written form has not been furnished or does not comply with the Standard.

☐ the computer readable form has not been furnished or does not comply with the Standard.

V. Reasoned statement under Article 35(2) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement

1. Statement

Novelty (N)	Yes: Claims	1,36
	No: Claims	
Inventive step (IS)	Yes: Claims	1,36
	No: Claims	
Industrial applicability (IA)	Yes: Claims	1,36
	No: Claims	

2. Citations and explanations

**INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY
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see separate sheet

**INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY
EXAMINATION REPORT - SEPARATE SHEET**

International application No. PCT/GB02/02730

Re Item III

Non-establishment of opinion with regard to novelty, inventive step and industrial applicability

1). Although claims 21, 28 and 40 have been drafted as separate independent claims additional to those examined in this IPER, they appear to relate effectively to the same subject-matter and to differ from each other only with regard to the definition of the subject-matter for which protection is sought or in respect of the terminology used for the features of that subject-matter. The aforementioned claims therefore lack conciseness. Moreover, lack of clarity of the claims as a whole arises, since the plurality of independent claims makes it difficult, if not impossible, to determine the matter for which protection is sought, and places an undue burden on others seeking to establish the extent of the protection.

1.1). Hence, these claims do not meet the requirements of Article 6 PCT.

1.2). There should in this case be only a single independent claim in each category followed by dependent claims covering features which are merely optional (Rule 6.4 PCT).

Re Item V

Reasoned statement under Rule 66.2(a)(ii) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement

2). Reference is made to the following documents:

- D1: US 2002/056215 A1 (BAUER PAUL F ET AL) 16 May 2002 (2002-05-16)
- D2: FR-A-2 821 309 (TRANSPORTS MICHEL) 30 August 2002 (2002-08-30)
- D3: US-B1-6 339 889 (BAUER PAUL F ET AL) 22 January 2002 (2002-01-22)
- D4: EP-A-1 001 403 (SCHMIDT KEVIN) 17 May 2000 (2000-05-17)
- D5: US-A-5 845 423 (HICKS CHARLES H) 8 December 1998 (1998-12-08)

3). **Claim 1:**

The present application concerns an advertising panel characterised by the fact that it is constructed from plastic mesh which allows passage of air there through. This mesh

sheet is attached to a supporting construction, or a vehicle, via a thicker longitudinal edge which slides into a slot on the support structure.

The advantage of the claimed construction over conventional display panels is that the free air passage through the open mesh structure reduces any aerodynamic load on the panel, therefore allowing the panel to be held simply by elongate, slot type fasteners along the longitudinal edges of the panel. With a closed material structure any aerodynamic load, whether caused by wind or by the panel being attached to a moving vehicle, would necessitate more complex fixing and tensioning means to prevent the panel from flapping and lifting.

Claim 36:

The method claim also incorporates the essential inventive features described above, namely the air-permeable plastic mesh substrate and the elongated slot-type fastening, which distinguish this invention from the cited prior art of the ISR.

3.1). Documents D1 and D2 are both published after the now relevant priority date of this application. It is to be noted that, according to the applicant's letter of 17.09.02, the priority is now only claimed from the UK patent No 0203209.2, dated 12.02.02. The priority date of this application is therefore 12.02.02, and not 12.12.02 as stated in the ISR.

3.2). Concerning the remaining documents of the ISR, none of the documents D3-D5 disclose or suggest the use of air permeable plastic mesh sheeting as the basis of an advertising panel, which necessarily leads in D3 and D5 to complex spring, or other, tensioning means along both axes of the panel via special straps to avoid the aerodynamic load. D5 also suggests the technique of wrappling the panel around the edges of the support/vehicle to avoid aerodynamic lift - a measure obviated by the apparatus according to claim 1.

Other comments:

Contrary to the requirements of Article 6 PCT, the claims do not define the relevant subject-matter in terms of a single independent claim in each category, followed by dependent claims covering features which are merely optional in accordance with Rule 6.4 PCT. This should be rectified with the next response.

**INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY
EXAMINATION REPORT - SEPARATE SHEET**

International application No. PCT/GB02/02730

The independent claims are not in the two-part form in accordance with Rule 6.3(b) PCT.

The features of the claims are not provided with reference signs placed in parentheses in accordance with Rule 6.2(b) PCT.

1 Claims

2

- 3 1. An advertising panel for mounting to a
4 structure, the panel comprising a sheet of plastic
5 mesh material provided with apertures allowing air
6 passage therethrough and having an image applied to
7 a first side of the sheet, wherein the panel has an
8 elongate fastener provided on at least one
9 longitudinal edge, the elongate fastener having a
10 thickness greater than the sheet and being adapted
11 to engage with a corresponding slot provided on the
12 structure.
- 13
- 14 2. An advertising panel according to Claim 1,
15 wherein the advertising panel is mounted to the
16 structure of a vehicle.
- 17
- 18 3. An advertising panel according to Claim 1,
19 wherein the advertising panel is mounted to a static
20 structure.
- 21
- 22 4. An advertising panel according to any preceding
23 Claim, wherein the sheet has a hem and the elongate
24 fastener comprises a longitudinal member held within
25 the hem of the sheet.
- 26
- 27 5. An advertising panel according to Claim 4,
28 wherein the hem is formed by folding an edge of the
29 sheet around the elongate fastener and back against
30 the sheet, then securing the edge to the sheet.
- 31

1 6. An advertising panel according to any of Claims
2 1 to 3, wherein the elongate fastener comprises a
3 longitudinal member secured to the sheet by an
4 edging strip.

5
6 7. An advertising panel according to Claim 6,
7 wherein the edging strip passes around the elongate
8 fastener and is secured to each side of the edge of
9 the sheet.

10
11 8. An advertising panel according to any preceding
12 Claim, wherein the longitudinal member is flexible.

13
14 9. An advertising panel according to any preceding
15 Claim, wherein the panel has an elongate fastener
16 provided on two opposite longitudinal edges.

17
18 10. An advertising panel according to any preceding
19 Claim, wherein the sheet is flexible.

20
21 11. An advertising panel according to any preceding
22 Claim, wherein the sheet is a mesh of PVC,
23 polyester, polypropylene or a combination thereof.

24
25 12. An advertising panel according to any preceding
26 Claim, wherein the sheet has an air permeability of
27 at least 1000 litres per second at 100 pascal.

28
29 13. An advertising panel according to any preceding
30 Claim, wherein the sheet of the advertising panel is
31 a woven material.

32

1 14. An advertising panel according to Claim 13,
2 wherein the woven material has warp and weft fibres
3 bonded to each other at their intersections.

4

5 15. An advertising panel according to any preceding
6 Claim, wherein the panel is substantially
7 rectangular.

8

9 16. An advertising panel according to any preceding
10 Claim, wherein the panel is provided with an
11 extension piece at one or both of the two opposite
12 side edges, said one or both extension pieces being
13 provided with securing means to allow them to be
14 wrapped around the corner of a vehicle and secured
15 to the vehicle.

16

17 17. An advertising panel according to any of Claims
18 1 to 15, wherein one or both of the two opposite
19 side edges are provided with reclosable interlocking
20 fasteners adapted to engage with corresponding
21 interlocking fasteners on the structure.

22

23 18. An advertising panel according to Claim 17,
24 wherein the fasteners are 3MTM Dual LockTM fasteners.

25

26 19. An advertising panel according to any of Claims
27 1 to 15, wherein one or both of the two opposite
28 side edges are provided with an elongate fastener
29 having a thickness greater than the sheet on each of
30 the two opposite side edges, the fastener being
31 adapted to engage with one or more lateral fastening
32 members on the structure.

1 20. An advertising panel according to Claim 19,
2 wherein the one or more lateral fastening members
3 are releasable clamping members adapted to clamp the
4 elongate fastener in a selected one of a plurality
5 of positions.
6

7 21. A vehicle having a wall provided with a slot or
8 slots on the exterior surface thereof, the vehicle
9 having an advertising panel mounted on said exterior
10 surface, the panel comprising a sheet of plastic
11 mesh material provided with apertures allowing air
12 passage therethrough and having an image applied to
13 a first side of the sheet, wherein the panel has an
14 elongate fastener provided on at least one
15 longitudinal edge, the elongate fastener having a
16 thickness greater than the sheet and engaged with
17 said slot or slots on said vehicle.
18

19 22. A vehicle according to Claim 21, wherein the
20 advertising panel is an advertising panel according
21 to any of Claims 1 to 20.
22

23 23. A vehicle according to Claim 21 or 22, wherein
24 the exterior surface is on a side wall of the
25 vehicle.
26

27 24. A vehicle according to any of Claims 21 to 23,
28 wherein the slot or slots are provided in one or
29 more track members bonded to the exterior surface by
30 adhesive.
31

1 25. A vehicle according to any of Claims 21 to 23,
2 wherein the slot or slots are provided in one or
3 more track members secured to the side wall by
4 fixing means.

5

6 26. A vehicle according to any of Claims 24 to 25,
7 wherein the track members are extruded members, and
8 the slot or slots are shaped to allow keying of the
9 elongate fastener with the slot or slots.

10

11 27. A vehicle according to Claim 26, wherein one or
12 more of said track members are provided on each of
13 the upper and lower edges of the exterior surface.

14

15 28. A vehicle having a load bearing volume at least
16 partially enclosed by a curtain, said curtain being
17 provided with a slot or slots on the exterior
18 surface thereof, the vehicle having an advertising
19 panel on said exterior surface, the panel comprising
20 a sheet of plastic mesh material provided with
21 apertures allowing air passage therethrough and
22 having an image applied to a first side of the
23 sheet, wherein the panel has an elongate fastener
24 provided on at least one longitudinal edge, the
25 elongate fastener having a thickness greater than
26 the sheet and engaged with said slot or slots on
27 said vehicle.

28

29 29. A vehicle according to Claim 28, wherein the
30 advertising panel is an advertising panel according
31 to any of Claims 1 to 20.

32

1 30. A vehicle according to Claim 28 or 29, wherein
2 the slot or slots are provided in one or more track
3 members bonded to the exterior surface by adhesive.
4

5 31. A vehicle according to Claim 28 or 29, wherein
6 the slot or slots are provided in one or more track
7 members secured to the side wall by fixing means.
8

9 32. A vehicle according to Claim 31, wherein
10 each of said track members has a corresponding
11 backing plate on the opposite side of the curtain,
12 the fixing means passing through the curtain and
13 joining the corresponding track member and backing
14 plate.
15

16 33. A vehicle according to any of Claims 28 to 32,
17 wherein the track members are extruded members, and
18 the slot or slots are shaped to allow keying of the
19 elongate fastener with the slot or slots.
20

21 34. A vehicle according to Claim 33, wherein one or
22 more of said track members are provided on each of
23 the upper and lower edges of the exterior surface.
24

25 35. A vehicle according to any of Claims 28 to 34,
26 wherein the track members are provided as discrete
27 lengths of track spaced at regular intervals on the
28 vehicle.
29

30 36. A method of modifying a vehicle to display at
31 least one advertising panel on at least one surface
32 of the vehicle, the panel comprising a sheet of

1 plastic mesh material provided with apertures
2 allowing air passage therethrough and having an
3 image applied to a first side of the sheet, wherein
4 the panel has an elongate fastener provided on at
5 least one longitudinal edge, the elongate fastener
6 having a thickness greater than the sheet said
7 method comprising the steps of:

8 securing one or more slotted track members in a
9 predetermined pattern on the surface of the vehicle
10 or on a curtain adapted to be mounted on the surface
11 of the vehicle, and

12 releasably attaching the advertising panel to
13 the one or more slotted track members by engaging
14 the elongate fastener in the slots provided on the
15 one or more slotted track members.

16

17 37. A method according to Claim 36, wherein the
18 advertising panel is an advertising panel according
19 to any of Claims 1 to 20.

20

21 38. A method according to Claim 36 or 37, wherein
22 the advertising panel is substantially rectangular
23 having upper and lower longitudinal edges and two
24 side edges, and wherein elongate fasteners at the
25 upper and lower longitudinal edges are engaged in
26 the slots provided on the one or more slotted track
27 members, including the further step of:

28 releasably attaching the side edges of the
29 advertising panel to one or more releasable clamping
30 members.

31

32 39. A method according to Claim 38, wherein:

1 at least one side edge is provided with an
2 elongate fastener,
3 the side edge is attached to the one or more
4 releasable clamping members by clamping the elongate
5 fastener in a selected one of a plurality of
6 positions, to adjust the lateral tension in the
7 advertising panel.

8
9 40. An advertising panel for mounting to a,
10 structure, the panel comprising a sheet of plastic
11 mesh material provided with apertures allowing air
12 passage therethrough and having an image applied to
13 a first side of the sheet, wherein the panel has a
14 plurality of resilient attachment means provided
15 along at least one edge of the panel.

16
17 41. A vehicle having a rear door, the rear door
18 having mounted thereon an advertising panel
19 according to Claim 40.

20
21 42. A vehicle according to Claim 41, wherein the
22 rear door is a roller shutter door.

23
24 43. A vehicle according to Claim 42, wherein the
25 rear door has attachment fixings secured thereto,
26 each attachment means being attached to an
27 attachment fixing and being adapted to allow elastic
28 extension of the attachment means when the roller
29 shutter door is in its rolled state with the
30 advertising panel mounted thereon.

31

- 1 44. A vehicle according to any of Claims 41 to 43,
2 wherein the resilient attachment means comprises
3 elastic tension members of natural or synthetic
4 rubber.